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MEASURING EAST JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL OF SIOUX CITY, IOWA

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When Professor E. E. Lewis of Iowa City published "Standards of Measuring Junior High Schools" (Bulletin 25), he may or may not have expected anyone to use them literally. But if every Junior High school in the United States should be revealed according to this standard, the result would be of inestimable value to those who are managing such schools and to those who are planning to establish them. Each Junior High school, so far, has been developed largely out of the needs of the locality, rather than out of conformity to a state or national standard, with the result that each school has developed some feature or other which could be of use or enlightenment to others throughout the nation.

Working upon this local basis, the management of East Junior High School of Sioux City, Iowa, was begun principally for the advantage it would produce at home. Its practices, regulation, and management are here being reduced to writing for the first time since the school was established in February, 1918. This will make possible a critical review of what has been begun and will make possible a checking according to the standards which Professor Lewis had gleaned from the practices of Junior High schools, up to the time he made his study.

This school has been started upon a basis of careful investigation of needs, rather than upon the copying of any other school in existence. Nothing that is old is ignored because it is old, and nothing that is new is welcomed just because it is new. Still there has been made a complete study of what has

been accepted and rejected elsewhere, and of what is theoretically applicable to this Junior High school. There has been no attempt to hasten toward a change unless local circumstances made that change necessary. No wide-sweeping or radical change has been made. Those few variations which have occurred will appear under the appropriate heading as concerned under the "standard of measurement."

I. ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

The requirement of entrance is normally the completion of the sixth grade here. Variations from this have been made, whereby pupils who have failed in only one subject may continue on condition that they do satisfactory work. In very few instances has there been any doubt as to the advisability of doing this. In case the pupil fails to do good work in this subject, he must go back to his sixth grade for the work in which he has been conditioned. It has not yet been considered expedient to draw from the sixth and fifth grades those who are past the age of twelve for special Pre-Junior classes. Present lack of room has been one of the deciding factors. It is not probable that arrangements can be made for these pupils except as they are dealt with in the lower six grades. However, the city school system maintains a Pre-Vocational school which is open to over-age boys of the fifth and sixth grades, in the fundamentals of Arithmetic, English, Manual Training and Occupations. Frequently these boys are placed in part time work and are placed in full time jobs upon completion of their pre-vocational work. These boys in some cases have continued in high school.

No prohibition has been made as to what should be the age of pupils when they enter, although twelve years seems to be the age at which the majority arrive. Not infrequently, pupils enter before they reach their twelfth year. Several pupils out of the present 432 have passed their seventeenth birthday.

II. CLASSIFICATION OF PUPILS

Classification has not yet been based upon any other standard than the completion of the required work. This is one of the respects in which East Junior High school prefers to be too conservative rather than too iconoclastic. All pupils are accepted at their school ranking, but are put back or advanced in subjects which show particular weakness or strength. Pupils who fail to make credits or who are weak in some subjects are urged to make up the deficiency in our summer school. In a few cases where pupils have been out of school at work, or because of indifference until they are too old for their present classmates, they are given a trial in the class ahead, sometimes only one or two subjects in advance, of the place where they left off. This advance, however, is always on condition. It rarely fails to inspire the pupils.

Those who have special "knowledge and ability to learn" (about whom Professor Lewis mentions classification of differentiated sort), those who have "special command of English" and those who have "natural capacity and interest" are usually ambitious enough to take care of themselves by summer school work and by insistence upon extra work in connection with the regular class periods. While the Senior High School of Sioux City has for more than a year used the proportional credit system, the Junior High School has not yet worked out any such arrangement. Some plan of the kind is likely to be employed soon.

Classification of pupils according to sex, occurs in the Manual Training and Domestic Training classes, while in the Physical Training and Penmanship classes it is used only because it is convenient there. There was some discussion about a similar separation in the Health and Physiology classes but for the present it seems to serve boys and girls best in their training for citizenship to keep them in mixed classes. In other classes there has been little thought about segregation of boys and girls.

III. GRADES INCLUDED

We include the seventh, eighth, and ninth years. In these three years it is possible for a pupil to accomplish as much as formerly completed in the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth grades. Algebra and Geometry of elementary type are introduced in the seventh and eighth; Latin is permitted in the eighth; a course in Occupations is offered in the last half of the eighth; and Manual Training and Domestic Training are required throughout the three years. Just what effect these changes and others which must follow will have upon the classification of pupils who are about to enter Senior High, will not be wholly apparent until the class which entered in February, 1918, goes through the last year of the Junior High School course. By that time corresponding changes will, no doubt, be made in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades.

IV. HOUSING

a. The Environment. The three plans of housing the Junior High school are as follows: In the same building with the Senior High, in the same building with the Elementary school, or the Gary plan where all twelve grades are in the same building. Sioux City has chosen the fourth, that of housing in a separate building. Some authorities have decried this plan, but where it has been actually tried it seems to have been successful. Not having tried any other in Sioux City, we can not compare it with the three plans but the year of experience proclaims it satisfactory.

Four advantages have revealed themselves. First, pupils become dependable at once. They are thrown with pupils of their own age, all of whom have a spirit of enthusiasm and effervescence which is waiting for guidance. They respond readily to responsibility placed upon them. They can be depended upon to use as good judgment as pupils of senior high school age. The second advantage is that they are more

easily managed. They like organizations. They like to have presidents, captains, and managers. They like to feel self-sufficient and to feel that they are contributing to what is going on about them. The third point is that they have no one to spoil. In a grade school, the liberties which are justifiable for the seventh and eighth grade pupils cause most of the disciplinary problems. The imitating children of five to ten years use as their protection the statement that "the big folks always do it." In the Junior High School separately housed, special privileges can be given to the pupils, thoughtlessness and awkwardness can be overlooked, and their superfluous energy can be guided. A fourth advantage is that there is no one for them to imitate. They are permitted just to "grow." The oldest boys have not yet reached the age or development when they think it clever to be "rough." As freshmen, ready for the Senior High School where they would be insignificant, they can be used as leaders in what they now consider to be most worth while. They hold the home influence one year longer; they become grounded in it; and after they are one year older they are more likely to refuse to imitate what younger boys, given places of inferiority in the big school, might possibly think heroic.

b. The Building. East Junior High School is a building of fireproof construction, built at a cost of \$100,000. It has twenty classrooms, not including four others which were designed for other purposes. The building has three floors of which the second is the main floor. This construction makes it necessary for pupils to climb only one and a half flights of stairs from the entrance door to reach the third floor, and to descend only one-half flight to the first floor.

The rooms are large and well lighted. There are no rooms at the corners of the building where cross lights might be possible. One whole side of each room is fitted with windows. All are equipped with adjustable drop shades so that, when

desirable, sunlight need be admitted only at the top. The rooms are heated by steam heat, regulated to 70 degrees by a delicate thermostat. All the woodwork of the building is dark antique oak. The floors of the rooms throughout are of hard wood, except in the halls where mosaic tile is used.

Of the twenty classrooms, two are equipped for Domestic Science and Domestic Art, with a small dining room between for practice-serving; two are equipped for Manual Training work; five were planned for Commercial studies, two for Book-keeping and Business Practice, and three for Typewriting and other Commercial subjects; three for Science laboratory and classrooms; and eight were designed to accommodate regular class work requiring no special arrangements.

Already the regular classes have usurped two of the Science rooms, four of the Commercial rooms, and one of the Manual Training rooms in addition to the Domestic Science dining room. As a consequence the hope that size of classes could be maintained at 20, will have to give way to a normal size of twenty-five pupils. The rooms are designed to accommodate thirty pupils each without congestion.

A large room about 60 feet by 90 feet serves as Assembly room and Gymnasium. The floor can seat 500 persons and a balcony 90. Connected with the Gymnasium are the Gymnasium dressing rooms for boys and for girls, containing individual lockers for gym and street clothing. Eight shower baths are provided in each locker room. In the corridor of the third floor are 300 steel lockers for the apparel, books, and papers of the pupils. Each student has a key to his locker. Two small rooms at the corners in the front of the building are utilized one as a girls' rest room with emergency equipment and the other as a Library reading room.

The building is well equipped throughout. It is built on the unit plan so that an addition of equal size can be added without much change to present parts of the building.

Promotion is made at the end of every semester. All pupils who finish the required number of studies satisfactorily are promoted to the next semester's work. The advance is made by subjects and by the number of credits. It is now possible for the pupils to make $5\frac{1}{2}$ credits each semester, making possible a total of thirty-three credits for the six semesters of the Junior High School. Even though a pupil fails in one subject and is required to repeat, he is permitted to go on in all subjects which have been satisfactorily done. Pupils may be advanced from one classification to the next even though one whole credit is missing, but if any fraction more than one credit is lost, the classification is lost. Although pupils who have previously missed credits have had their choice whether or not they should make it up by some special arrangement, it will likely become the policy to urge that all pupils maintain the standard classification.

Summer school is the principal make-up opportunity. Other arrangements have been made and will be made for those who are worthy of such consideration. The pupils who meet certain requirements for outside music study are given school credit for it in the ninth grade. More frequent promotion than that available under the semester plan, is not likely to be introduced, except in special cases with certain individuals who merit it.

V. KIND OF COURSES

There is no variation of courses in the seventh and eighth grades except that Latin may be chosen by certain pupils of the Junior Eighth classification. (The requirement is that these pupils average 85—"b"—in all subjects and that no monthly grade be below "b" in English. The pupils drop English for Latin, and the Latin is tempered by English spelling and English reading.) All pupils are required to study Language, Mathematics, History, Manual Training or Domestic Training,

Music, Penmanship, and one of the following subjects, corresponding to their class—Hygiene, Geography or Occupational Geography. Penmanship is required of nearly all pupils. Physical Training always has a place in the curriculum.

Beginning with the ninth grade, two diverging courses are offered. These are the Occupational and the General. The Occupational course, which differs through offering Commercial English, Commercial Arithmetic, General Science, and Typewriting, is designed for those pupils who must go to work before the completion of the senior High School course, or who are determined to enter business early. The General course is designed for those pupils who feel sure that they are going farther in school work.

Electives are interchangeable between these two courses. In the Junior Ninth pupils may choose two of the following: Physiography, General Science, Greek History, or Latin. In the Senior Ninth those choices are to be followed, except that Physiography is replaced by Physiology. While the Manual Training and Domestic Training do not form elective courses, they present such variety that they are worth mentioning here. The Domestic work covers Cooking, Sewing, Designing, and Household Art. The Manual work includes Mechanical Drawing, Designing, Woodwork, Tinwork, Metal Art Work, and Brick construction, and Printing. The Occupational Geography class, which comes in the Senior Eighth semester, offers a reasonable acquaintance with past and present Industry, and gives a broad survey of the occupational world. With the co-operation of the State University of Iowa through means of educational moving picture films, this subject promises to be interesting in its effect upon the entire school.

VI. DEPARTMENTALIZED INSTRUCTION

East Junior High School has struck the middle ground between the one-teacher-for-all-subjects plan and the special-

ized-teacher plan. Teachers must be prepared to take one group of pupils in two different subjects. Although Mathematics and English seem to be the wholesome combination from our standpoint, any two subjects may be combined, such as History-Hygiene, Geography-Mathematics, History-English, and others. Aside from this one requirement, teachers are permitted to have all other classes in their special work. This arrangement does not affect the Music Instructor, Manual or Domestic Instructors, and in one or two cases does not affect special teachers.

Pupils go from room to room; teachers keep the same room throughout the day.

While it is desirable for a teacher to keep the same class through the subsequent semester, the large number of irregularities arising from failures and diminished size of classes from other causes, make it impractical. This is one reason why greater stress is to be placed upon maintaining classification here.

“Promotion by Subjects” (as called for by the Standard of Measuring) has been discussed. “The Teacher’s Advance” is brought about by requirements for specialization, by a comparative and progressive schedule of salaries, and by a mathematical salary recognition for summer school study done by teachers at recognized colleges or universities. “Enforcement of the Time Schedule” is maintained by an automatic clock system which rings for the passing and for the beginning of classes.

VII. PREPARATION OF TEACHERS

The requirements for the teachers of the seventh and eighth grades are two years’ experience of teaching and completion of the Sioux City Normal Training school or completion of High School course followed by normal or college training. The requirements for the ninth grade are a college degree and two years of teaching experience. The

ideal preparation for the Junior High School is maintenance of the ninth grade requirements for all three years. At present many of the seventh and eighth grade classes are being taught by college graduates, one of whom is a Master of Arts and several others who are working toward that degree. Junior High school work calls for the best prepared, most ambitious, and most professionally enthusiastic teachers available.

VIII. THE STUDENT ADVISORY SYSTEM

A Home-Room-System whereby the teacher of each room of the first period in the morning holds the pupils responsible for conduct, attendance, study, and general attitude throughout the day in and out of class, is the basis of our advisory organization. This teacher is expected to be the guide, adviser, and friend to whom the pupil may come at any time on any pretext or need. While the home-room is primarily a part of the disciplinary organization, it has become inspirational and directive. "Welfare Period", thirty minutes in length, is conducted every Wednesday in the home-room. At this time the pupils are permitted to engage in any kind of activity, entertainment, or fun which meets the approval of the teacher. The games, jokes, debates, parties, funny stories, programs, current events, knitting, thrift campaigns, Red Cross work, parliamentary drills, elections, curio studies, and general good times have done much toward bringing about a comradeship between the teacher and pupils. The home-room teacher is the embodiment of the social, moral, civic, and educational guidance.

More directly occupational, stands the teacher of the Occupational Geography classes. While being concerned primarily with the Senior Eighth pupils, this instructor takes within legitimate province the occupational direction of the entire Junior High school. The Principal, the Instructor in Manual Training, and the Instructor in Occupational Geog-

graphy have assumed the responsibility of occupational and vocational direction. Lists of occupations open to boys and girls have been prepared to cover all important activities, over 100 for boys and about 85 for girls. A questionnaire designed to reveal pupils' inclinations and choices has been prepared and will be placed in the hands of each Junior High School pupil. This when properly filled out, will be kept on file for reference. When deemed advisable, individuals will be interviewed and advised along what seems to be their bent. It is hoped that many pupils may be encouraged to make out a tentative line of progress and effort covering five or ten years ahead.

Assuming without much fear of contradiction that the school is the place where citizenship should be fostered, with reliability, industry, initiative, and relationship to the work-a-day world as some of the factors, it is hoped that soon the activities of the pupil's twenty-four-hours will be considered in estimating school standings. At least those activities must be considered by the three persons mentioned above in playing the rôle of investigators and advisers.

IX. SUPERVISED STUDY

East Junior High School started with the supervised study class-period sixty minutes long and a five minute passing period between classes.

During the first semester of experience with it, each teacher was urged to use individual judgment as to the best way of managing the study period. As a result a variety of splendid ideas has been gathered upon methods and devices of conducting the hour-class in each semester's work in every subject of the curriculum. Each teacher contributed in writing whatever recommendations and preferences seemed desirable. From these contributions has been worked out a summary discussion which should prove of advantage to

teachers unacquainted with the supervised study plan. Some of the principal points touched upon are the following:

1. How shall the period be divided?
2. What is expected of any teacher in the classroom?
3. How shall a teacher employ herself while pupils study?
4. What should be the manner of studying lessons?
5. How shall the class group be managed?
6. What conduct should be expected of pupils?
7. How shall the teacher handle the special subject?
8. How shall pupils of varying ability be managed and kept busy?
9. What is the basis of a teacher's merit under supervised study?
10. How should (or may) teachers contribute to the general policy?
11. What observation of teachers' work is desirable?
12. How may we test the efficiency of the supervised study system?

Nearly all teachers seem to be well pleased with the supervised study period of an hour in length. It lends itself to easy division, seems to be just long enough to satisfy the pupils, and is a good workable period. Teachers have caught the spirit of the group-guide and group-helper instead of feeling themselves to be the critic and boss. They have frequently expressed themselves as being rid of that "fatigue" which haunted them at the end of the day in regular grade school work. The supervised study plan is still under observation and development.

The nine points of the "Standard of Measuring Junior High Schools" cover the principal distinguishing features of Junior High schools. By following them through in this manner a great amount of clearness and definiteness is possible for new development. Such a study of itself must be of benefit to the school studied, and in a remote way be of value to others.